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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES OR REGIONS

Assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 49/21 E of 20 December 1994, the General Assembly, inter alia, called upon the international community and intergovernmental organizations to provide Liberia with technical, financial and other assistance for the repatriation and resettlement of Liberian refugees, returnees and displaced persons and for the rehabilitation of combatants.

2. The Assembly also appealed to the international community and intergovernmental organizations to provide adequate assistance to programmes identified in the report of the Secretary-General on assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia (A/49/466), including the preparation of a new appeal for humanitarian assistance to cover emergency assistance needs and to support the peace process.

3. In the same resolution, the Assembly reiterated its appeal to the international community to contribute generously to the Trust Fund established by the Secretary-General, in order to enable the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to fulfil its mandate and to help defray the cost of deployment of additional troops from outside the subregion.

4. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to coordinate the work of the United Nations system and to mobilize assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia; to undertake, when conditions permit, in close collaboration with the authorities of Liberia, an overall assessment of needs, with the objective of holding, when appropriate, a round-table conference of donors for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Liberia; and to report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the resolution.

5. The present report describes activities carried out in Liberia since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General (A/49/466) in October 1994. Information on assistance to Liberian refugees in the neighbouring countries will be incorporated in a separate report of the Secretary-General in accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/174 of 23 December 1994.

6. During the past year, most United Nations efforts have been directed towards supporting the peace process in Liberia, delivering humanitarian assistance to victims of civil conflict, providing for the emergency needs of displaced persons and, where possible, continuing rehabilitation activities. United Nations agencies as well as national and international non-governmental organizations were all active in the relief effort, with overall coordination provided by the United Nations Resident Coordinator. Priorities included: (a) regaining access to civilian populations in areas controlled by factions; (b) preparing a new appeal for humanitarian assistance requirements; (c) meeting the emergency needs of newly displaced populations; and (d) developing a cohesive and shared strategy to meet the needs of the greatest possible number of affected civilians.

7. In September 1994, humanitarian assistance organizations operating outside ECOMOG-controlled areas suffered serious losses when much of their equipment was looted by warring factions. The immediate effect was the cessation of virtually all relief activities outside the greater Monrovia and Buchanan areas. Repeated efforts by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and by individual United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to have their equipment and materials returned were unsuccessful.

8. The looting of humanitarian assistance materials was said to have been reflective of a breakdown in the control exercised by faction leaders over their fighters. In addition to severely restricting the geographic scope of relief efforts, the violence and heightened insecurity that accompanied the looting forced tens of thousands of civilians to seek refuge in Monrovia and Buchanan, increasing the population of displaced persons in both cities significantly. Continued fighting during 1995, notably between the Liberia Peace Council (LPC) and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and between rival branches of the United Liberation Movement for Democracy (ULIMO), resulted in further large-scale population displacements and prevented humanitarian assistance agencies from helping those civilians unable to flee the affected areas.

9. In June 1995, the reach of humanitarian assistance activities increased somewhat when ECOMOG secured the roads northeast from Monrovia to Kakata and Bong Town, and north and west from Monrovia to Tubmanburg and Bo. The newly secured roads allowed for preliminary deliveries of relief supplies from Monrovia to affected areas. A study undertaken by Médecins sans frontières (MSF)-Belgium, Save the Children Fund (SCF)-United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the European Union during the period of increased access gave an indication of the seriousness of the plight of the population. The study in upper Margibi and lower Bong counties revealed global and severe malnutrition rates of 56 per cent and 42 per cent, respectively, illustrating the effects on the population of being cut off from sustained assistance of any sort.

10. By September 1995, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations were working to benefit from the road openings by expanding operations into those areas where they could be provided with credible security guarantees. In addition, a number of humanitarian assistance organizations continued to deliver relief supplies from Côte d'Ivoire into Nimba and Bong counties, and sporadically from Guinea into upper Lofa county.

11. While maintaining a division of labour based on mandate and expertise, the humanitarian agencies operating in Liberia adopted a number of shared operating principles and protocols to serve as the basis for their respective operations. The principles and protocols, developed under the auspices of the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator with the assistance of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, emphasize the impartiality of humanitarian assistance work and the importance of operating in a coordinated manner.

12. It is estimated that 1.8 million Liberians require humanitarian assistance, of whom 1.5 million are currently accessible to relief organizations. Though the plausible security guarantees required for a rapid expansion of relief

activities have not yet been secured, a number of gains have been made, particularly the opening of the roads from Monrovia.

II. SUPPORT FOR THE PEACE PROCESS

A. Assistance for peace monitoring

13. In addition to providing humanitarian assistance to Liberia since the inception of the crisis, the United Nations has undertaken a series of initiatives to promote the peaceful settlement of the conflict. This included the fielding of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) following the signing of the Cotonou Agreement in July 1993. 1/

14. In November 1994, pursuant to Security Council resolution 950 (1994) of 21 October 1994, the Secretary-General dispatched a high-level mission to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone to explore avenues for advancing the peace process. The mission concluded, inter alia, that it was of central importance that ECOWAS members harmonize their policies on Liberia. Deliberations at Accra in November and December and the signing by factions of the Accra Agreement on 21 December 1994 2/ signified progress in the peace process.

15. In a further effort to consolidate peace, the Third Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the ECOWAS Committee of Nine on Liberia was convened at Abuja from 17 to 20 May 1995. The meeting stressed the importance of enforcing the arms embargo established by the Security Council in its resolution 788 (1992) of 19 November 1992, and monitoring the cease-fire agreement signed by factions on 28 December 1994. The Abuja summit was followed by bilateral consultations in the Nigerian capital between Nigerian officials and a number of faction leaders.

16. Mr. Anthony Nyaki succeeded Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in January 1995. Mr. Nyaki began consultations with Governments in the region to determine how best the United Nations could complement ECOWAS efforts to achieve peace. As a result of these consultations and consistent with the conclusions of the ECOWAS meeting held at Abuja in May 1995, Mr. Nyaki regularized the activities of the cease-fire monitoring committee, a representational body assembled to investigate allegations of cease-fire violations.

17. Despite these developments, the peace process continued to encounter serious problems. Fighting continued in many areas of the country, preventing the extension of Government jurisdiction and the initiation of comprehensive rehabilitation and resettlement schemes. By its resolution 1001 (1995) of 30 June 1995, the Security Council established four conditions for the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) beyond 15 September 1995: (a) installation of the Council of State; (b) re-establishment of a comprehensive and effective cease-fire; (c) disengagement of all forces; and (d) establishment of an agreed timetable for the implementation of all other aspects of the peace agreements.

18. In July, two meetings were held at Monrovia between Liberian parties as a follow-up to the Abuja summit. The first meeting, held from 13 to 17 July, was sponsored by the Women's Groups of Liberia. The second meeting, facilitated by ECOWAS, the Government of Nigeria, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Carter Center, was held from 19 to 23 July.

19. These consultations resulted, inter alia, in the adoption of a resolution endorsing a six-member Council of State and reaffirming the factions' commitment to disarmament, the creation of safe havens and the reopening of roads and ports. The parties also discussed the issue of power-sharing between the two wings of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO) and decided to establish a technical committee to facilitate an agreement between them.

20. The Chairman of ECOWAS convened a meeting of the factions at Abuja from 16 to 19 August, which culminated in the signing by the Liberian parties of an agreement 3/ amending and supplementing the Cotonou and Akosombo Agreements, as subsequently clarified by the Accra Agreement. The Abuja Agreement provided for and resulted in the establishment of a comprehensive cease-fire on 26 August 1995 and a new six-member Council of State, which was installed on 1 September 1995. The new Council would remain in power for a period of one year, until the holding of elections on 20 August 1996. The Agreement also included a schedule of implementation and a formula for the distribution of government posts, which the parties have implemented.

21. The new Council of State held its first session immediately after its installation on 1 September. Reports indicate that the new transitional government enjoys the full support of all the key political leaders of Liberia, as well as the population at large.

22. The Council of State has already announced new appointments to the Cabinet and assigned oversight responsibilities for Ministries, autonomous agencies and public corporations to Council members. Nominations to the Supreme Court have also been made, and consultations are under way to fill the few remaining posts in the Transitional Legislative Assembly and the Electoral Commission.

23. On 4 September, the Cease-fire Violations Committee, chaired by UNOMIL, met to review with the factions plans for monitoring the cease-fire and the implementation of the other provisions of the peace agreement, including disarmament and demobilization. A Disarmament Committee, chaired by ECOMOG, has also been established to draw up plans for the disengagement of forces, disarmament and the exchange of prisoners of war.

24. With the conclusion of the Abuja Agreement, the entry into force of the cease-fire and the installation of the Council of State, plans are being prepared for the further expansion of UNOMIL. UNOMIL was invited to attend the ECOWAS Chiefs of Staff Meeting held at Accra on 4 and 5 September to work out the modalities for the implementation of the military aspects of the Abuja Agreement. The international community, in particular the United Nations, was urgently requested to support ECOMOG and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants. It was strongly felt that failure to focus on the

requirements of combatants could adversely affect the peace process, and that the momentum generated by the Abuja Agreement should be maintained.

B. Initiatives for rehabilitation, reconstruction and national reconciliation

25. During the reporting period, the food-for-work and institution strengthening activities of the World Food Programme (WFP) increased by 100 per cent. The WFP emergency school feeding programme was expanded to cover 550 schools in Montserrado, Margibi and Buchanan, reaching a total of 182,000 school children. Food-for-work incentives were also provided to teachers and support staff in schools and orphanages, as well as medical and support staff in clinics and hospitals. In addition, the National Volunteer Programme, which was established to support the reintegration of ex-combatants into civil society through food-for-work schemes, benefited 1,800 demobilized fighters before its suspension in early 1995.

26. In the agricultural sector, five pipeline projects of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations were approved for 1995 and are now under way. They are aimed at improving food security through cassava production and processing, distribution of seeds and tools, training in extension methods and development of artisanal fisheries. FAO is also planning sectoral review and crop assessment missions, for which United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funding has been earmarked. The missions will provide a basis for the rehabilitation and reconstruction plan to be formulated in collaboration with UNDP and the Government. Efforts are also under way to develop a sustainable food security strategy. FAO is also planning a review of current agricultural statistics in order to facilitate the distribution of farm inputs as access increases.

27. In anticipation of the longer-term rehabilitation of Liberia's education sector, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNDP have worked with the Ministry of Education and local and international non-governmental organizations to develop "A Basic Education and Training Sector Reconstruction Programme (1995-2000)". The programme will focus on the rehabilitation of primary and secondary schools and Learning Centres, which will provide non-formal basic education; upgrading the skills of staff members from the Ministry of Education and county education offices; decentralization of responsibilities to the grass-roots or county level; improvement of curricula; and restructuring of the existing education systems.

III. SECTORAL REVIEW OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

A. Food and nutrition

28. During the period under review, WFP and other relief agencies, particularly Catholic Relief Services (CRS), addressed emergency relief food needs in all accessible areas of Liberia. Food commodities provided were rice, bulgur wheat, corn soya blend, beans and vegetable oil. In 1994, more than 87,000 metric tons of relief food was distributed. WFP provided 60 per cent of the food, CRS provided 30 per cent and other organizations, including Save the Children Fund, provided the remaining 10 per cent.

29. Food commodities are shipped to Monrovia and to San Pedro (Côte d'Ivoire), where they are directly delivered to designated non-governmental organizations, including the Lutheran World Service/Lutheran World Federation (LWS/LWF), at regional warehouses. Internal transport, storage and handling costs are met by WFP. Field distribution of WFP and most CRS food commodities is performed by several national and international non-governmental organizations at more than 1,500 distribution points.

30. During the first six months of 1994, the level of food distribution in Liberia increased from 6,250 metric tons to an average of 7,600 metric tons, as the security situation allowed for the expansion of relief distribution into Nimba, Bong and Bomi counties. In Bomi and Cape Mount counties, emergency distribution was possible only in a few towns secured by ECOMOG. In areas occupied by the NPFL, WFP organized 28 cross-line convoys from Monrovia carrying a total of 6,000 metric tons between January and August 1994. Over the same period, non-governmental organizations dispatched 25 convoys carrying a total of 1,400 metric tons of food. A total of 17 metric tons was also delivered across the border to Ganta and Gbarnga from Côte d'Ivoire, in order to meet the emergency food aid needs of approximately 425,000 beneficiaries. During that same period, 850 metric tons of emergency relief food were also delivered to Maryland county, from Tabou, Côte d'Ivoire.

31. From September 1994 onward, delivery of food aid to those areas outside ECOMOG control was largely suspended, following a renewed outbreak of fighting and the theft of large amounts of property from relief organizations as described above. Distribution of emergency food aid continued, however, in Montserrado, lower Margibi and lower Grand Bassa counties for a case-load of 1.3 million persons, including 830,000 displaced. Fighting in areas outside ECOMOG control continued to displace Liberians into Monrovia and its environs, Harbel and Smell-No-Taste in lower Margibi county and Buchanan in Grand Bassa county. WFP and CRS carried out monthly food distributions of approximately 2,500 metric tons to 35 centres for displaced persons in those areas.

32. General distribution of emergency food aid in Monrovia is carried out three times per year. Approximately 9,000 metric tons of relief food is distributed to 900,000 beneficiaries, based on an established system of registered beneficiaries per household unit. This general distribution will be phased out during 1995 in favour of targeted feeding.

33. The overall case-load for emergency food aid in Liberia for 1995 is 1.5 million persons, including 100,000 Sierra Leonean refugees. The standard ration for displaced persons and refugees, as recommended by WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), remains at 200 grams of cereal per person per day. In rural areas, the daily ration includes 60 grams of pulse and in urban areas, 25 grams of oil. The normal ration is supplemented with 100 grams of cereal and 125 grams of corn soya blend for vulnerable groups.

34. Ongoing fighting and the consequent population displacement seriously reduced agricultural activities in 1994 and the first nine months of 1995. Agricultural populations in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Bassa, Cape Mount and Bomi counties were displaced and prevented from planting. As a result, WFP has projected a continued need for emergency food aid for 1996 in the Liberia Regional Protracted Operation (covering Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea), more than 80 per cent of whose beneficiaries are Liberian.

B. Agriculture

35. During the reporting period, FAO activities were focused on the acquisition and distribution of farming inputs to increase household food security for accessible agricultural communities. FAO also provided displaced persons, ex-combatants and, in some cases, refugees with seed rice, vegetable seeds and farm tools through its Technical Assistance Programme and contributions from the European Community. In collaboration with non-governmental organizations, FAO was able to distribute vegetable seeds and farm tools to 50,000 farming families in Montserrado, Grand Bassa and Margibi counties.

36. FAO's collaborating partners include the non-governmental organizations Africare, CRS and LWS, as well as a number of local non-governmental organizations. International non-governmental organizations have played an instrumental role in the agricultural sector by providing vegetable and rice seeds and tools to targeted populations.

C. Health and medical care

37. Efforts to rehabilitate the health sector continue through the collaboration of the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Ministry of Health and national and international non-governmental organizations. During the reporting period, the inaccessibility of many parts of the country limited the delivery of health sector services and reduced the number of functioning health centres. Thanks to recent improvements in security, agencies working in the health sector have begun rebuilding the shattered health infrastructure in Bong and Cape Mount counties. They have also continued to provide curative and preventative health care in all accessible areas.

38. Increased displacement and overcrowded living conditions have further increased the population's vulnerability to epidemic diseases. Malaria continues to be a problem of major concern as it is the leading cause of

morbidity and mortality in all age groups. WHO, UNICEF and other organizations active in the health sector have initiated several community-based malaria control programmes.

39. The incidence of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections is also high, particularly for young children. WHO and UNICEF are expanding programmes for control of diarrhoea diseases, particularly in Monrovia and Buchanan. UNICEF is also supporting the establishment of an organized programme for acute respiratory infections by providing essential drugs to all mothers and child health clinics in Monrovia. This drug supply is supplemented by WHO. The results of three Expanded Immunization Programme (EPI) surveys conducted in accessible areas show a steady increase in immunization coverage for children under one year old.

40. Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) has also become a serious health problem. At the end of 1993, surveillance data indicated that about 5 per cent of persons surveyed (mainly from Monrovia) were seropositive. In 1994, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevalence studies were undertaken on selected populations in accessible areas and 12 new cases were reported. As at December 1994, 44 cases of AIDS were reported for Liberia. The National AIDS Programme, largely supported by WHO, continues to focus on public awareness activities, training, condom distribution and blood-safety examination.

41. WHO is also sponsoring programmes to combat other diseases, especially epilepsy and onchocerciasis (river blindness). The beneficiaries of the river blindness and epilepsy programmes number about 1,500 and 150 respectively. Along with several non-governmental organizations and UNICEF, WHO participated in the control of the cholera outbreak between July and November 1994 by providing US$ 6,000 worth of intravenous fluids and by supporting an information campaign.

42. To combat psycho-social ailments, WHO facilitated the opening of the only mental health facility in the country. This facility provides psychiatric care for patients and consultative services to the J. F. Kennedy Hospital and to various non-governmental organizations engaged in programme support to young people (including UNICEF-supported programmes for abused women and girls; the Children's Assistance Programme; Don Bosco homes; and the work of the non-governmental organization Liberians United Against Drug Abuse).

43. The supply of medical drugs in Liberia is being addressed by the National Drug Service (NDS) which is supported by UNICEF. NDS provides essential drugs, equipment, other medical supplies and training for medical personnel. There were 70 health facilities supported by NDS as of mid-1995. An NDS sub-station located in Grand Bassa county serves the increasing number of non-governmental organizations and health facilities operating in that area. In addition, a recent contribution of US$ 140,000 from the Government of the United States of America will allow for the provision of essential drugs and medical supplies to help control malaria and diarrhoeal and respiratory infections in camps for displaced persons, refugee centres and recently accessible areas of western Liberia. This contribution will also allow for resettlement of health workers to their original places of work for at least six months, and provide direct support to victims of the conflict.

44. Community mobilization and health education, training of traditional birth attendants and family planning and child survival programmes have also begun in Bomi and Cape Mount counties. An initial 207 cycles of oral contraceptives were provided to health centres and five kits to two groups of traditional birth attendants in targeted camps. WHO will work with a local non-governmental organization to train 52 traditional birth attendants in Tubmanburg. Locally made kits for traditional birth attendants will be provided upon completion of the training from emergency funds donated by the Government of the United Kingdom.

45. The WHO programme for the remainder of 1995 foresees, inter alia, provision of basic health services to approximately 1.3 million persons in ECOMOG-controlled areas. This includes populations in Monrovia and its environs, as well as displaced persons in Buchanan, Harbel and the recently accessible areas in Bomi and Cape Mount counties.

D. Water and sanitation

46. The provision of safe drinking water and improvement of general sanitation continue to be among the more critical needs to be met in Liberia. The situation is being addressed through the collaborative efforts of UNICEF and non-governmental organizations, principally MSF-Belgium, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Action internationale contre la faim (AICF) and the African Muslim Agency (AMA).

47. Prior to the civil war, approximately 90 per cent of the population of Monrovia relied on the supply of treated pipe water from the White Plains water treatment plant. During clashes in October 1992, the treatment plant was extensively damaged. Following repairs undertaken with the assistance of UNICEF, the plant resumed operations in late 1993. Since then, the plant has been supplying about one third of the population of Monrovia.

48. From a country-wide perspective, the general situation has not dramatically improved during the reporting period. This is partly attributable to the renewed fighting and heightened insecurity that struck many parts of the country, making them inaccessible for relief operations. Currently, a significant portion of the population is being serviced by natural sources and the 350 shallow and hand-dug wells equipped with hand pumps constructed by UNICEF and international non-governmental organizations, including MSF-Belgium, AICF and AMA. UNICEF continues to provide regular maintenance and spare parts for these hand pumps and closely monitors the delivery of emergency water supplies to hospitals, clinics, orphanages and one shelter for displaced persons.

49. In support of the Monrovia shallow wells programme, UNICEF is conducting mass well chlorination campaigns to reduce the incidence of diarrhoeal disease. Under the campaigns conducted in 1994 and January 1995, approximately 4,800 open and protected wells were chlorinated. Information on self-chlorination using locally available household bleach is also being disseminated to communities to further control water-borne diseases. Initial surveillance reports show that

the chlorination intervention has been effective, and therefore two additional mass chlorination campaigns are planned for 1995.

50. In the absence of a functional government body responsible for rural water supply and sanitation, UNICEF assistance is implemented through local non-governmental organizations and communities. In 1994, UNICEF water and sanitation programmes in the rural areas resulted in the rehabilitation of 160 hand pumps and the construction of 18 hand-dug wells equipped with hand pumps, 4 group latrines at schools and health centres and 36 family latrines. Currently, security conditions in the rural areas have reduced UNICEF chlorination activities. In peri-urban areas, 22 hand-dug wells equipped with hand pumps and 38 family latrines were provided along with health and hygiene education. UNICEF intervention in the water and sanitation sector has reached about 60,000 beneficiaries in the rural and peri-urban communities.

51. UNICEF is also implementing sanitation activities at shelters for displaced persons in Monrovia and Buchanan. In 1994, in collaboration with local non-governmental organizations and shelter sanitation groups, a total of 19 shelter latrines and 13 hand-dug wells equipped with pumps were constructed. In addition, 28 shelter latrines were de-sludged continuously to maintain sanitary conditions. To improve the efficiency of this activity, UNICEF has purchased a small sewage truck.

52. Owing to the increase in the number of displaced persons arriving in Buchanan, beginning in February 1995, and the acute shortage of water during the dry season, UNICEF gave support to AICF in providing emergency water supply for new arrivals. UNICEF is also supporting the health and hygiene education programme at 12 shelters for displaced persons through a local non-governmental organization by disseminating messages on diarrhoeal control, personal hygiene, breast-feeding and EPI.

53. UNDP, through its emergency project, plans to support a micro-project intended to upgrade 25 of the existing wells which are in poor condition in Tubmanburg. UNICEF, through HOPE, a local non-governmental organization, plans to construct eight new wells and rehabilitate two existing wells. WHO and the United Nations Office for Project Services are collaborating to protect five wells to help control diarrhoeal disease at Bo, where 35,000 displaced persons and refugees are concentrated.

E. Education and training

54. The previous report indicated that education opportunities were available in many counties. The renewed hostilities have wiped out the gains made in this domain. There are now only a few schools in operation outside Monrovia, in areas controlled by ECOMOG.

55. In Monrovia, 554 schools are functional, though many are handicapped by shortage of supplies and equipment. Large numbers of schools have been burnt down and looted, while others are being used as shelters for the displaced. In rural Liberia, the fighting in September 1994 in and around Gbarnga reportedly left the few remaining schools in that area damaged and looted.

56. In collaboration with WFP and several non-governmental organizations, UNICEF has initiated a feeding programme and free distribution of school supplies. These activities are designed to encourage schoolchildren and teachers to return to schools. In areas where people can afford to pay the minimum fees for school supplies, UNICEF supports a local non-governmental organization, Christian Related Education Development Organization (CREDO), in the implementation of a revolving fund project for school supplies and equipment. In Monrovia, 400 schools benefit from the fund. About 300 schools in other areas of the country participate in the revolving fund.

57. UNICEF is funding teacher training workshops to cover areas such as the development and improvement of the core curriculum for elementary and junior high schools, war trauma, educational psychology, lesson planning, production of educational materials, coping with stress and related topics.

58. UNICEF and CREDO facilitated the reopening of the Buchanan curriculum materials centre by providing educational supplies and equipment. The centre, which was closed down two years ago as a result of the war, caters to about 58 schools with an enrolment of 20,000 students and 500 teachers in the city of Buchanan. The Salesian Fathers of Don Bosco undertook a one-year literacy project for street children in Monrovia funded by UNICEF. Five hundred children participated in the programme. The Salesian Fathers are also managing a children's transit home facility serving 112 children. An additional 47 children benefit from a street literacy programme on Benson Street in central Monrovia. Don Bosco has also introduced a courier service meant to provide employment opportunities for young people who have recently been reunited with their families.

59. Additionally, UNICEF and the New Breed Painters Association (a local artists' group in Monrovia) are implementing a children's art and music project at three shelters for displaced persons. A mobile school library project is also being implemented by LWS on behalf of UNICEF. The two projects are benefiting a total of 1,350 children.

F. Specific target groups

1. Refugees

60. At the end of 1994, UNHCR was providing protection and assistance to 794,000 Liberian refugees in neighbouring west African countries. In Liberia itself, the office also continues to provide assistance to refugees from Sierra Leone as well as to Liberian returnees and some 100,000 internally displaced persons. The deteriorating security situation in Liberia has limited the assistance provided to refugees and returnees to areas controlled by ECOMOG.

61. While no large-scale organized repatriation of Liberian refugees took place during the reporting period, spontaneous repatriation continued despite the volatile political situation. In 1994, UNHCR assisted 6,700 spontaneous returnees, the majority from Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. In 1995, the security situation in neighbouring asylum countries, particularly Sierra Leone, has caused more Liberian refugees to repatriate. By the end of May 1995, UNHCR in

Monrovia had received 4,123 returnees from Sierra Leone. It is expected that this trend will continue.

62. The security situation has also blocked the implementation of plans for reintegration and rehabilitation activities. It is hoped that, with the extended deployment of ECOMOG along the roads to Tubmanburg, Bong Mine and Kakata, UNHCR will be able to introduce quick impact projects for returnees, as well as participate in community rehabilitation projects with other relief agencies. Such projects will benefit refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. A planning figure of 35,000 refugees has been established for the UNHCR repatriation programme and related reintegration activities. This will be reviewed regularly to take account of the evolution of the political situation.

63. Of an estimated 120,000 refugees from Sierra Leone residing in Liberia, UNHCR currently assists 25,000 on a regular basis and another 35,000 when security permits. The remaining 60,000 refugees in upper Lofa have been cut off from any relief activities since December 1993. A joint assessment mission to upper Lofa in August 1994 reported widespread malnutrition and a deteriorating health situation. It is also reported that agricultural activities in the area had been curtailed and most social and administrative infrastructure destroyed.

2. Internally displaced persons

64. Fighting in a number of locations during the reporting period increased the number of internally displaced persons in Liberia to over 800,000. This group is often the hardest hit among war-affected populations. Forced to flee with few or no belongings and without the unique international status of refugees, displaced persons must be provided with basic survival needs. In Liberia, an inter-agency effort has allowed for improvement in the delivery of relief items to this vulnerable group.

65. Those displaced persons who are absorbed by local populations receive food aid from WFP or CRS and benefit from the multisectoral programmes of a number of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. The nearly 600,000 displaced persons who have sought refuge in 91 camps in secure areas of the country also benefit from an agreed division of labour among United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and local officials. The United Nations Office of Project Services, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, CRS, SCF-United Kingdom, AICF, MSF-Belgium, MSF-France and MSF-Holland are each involved in supporting displaced shelters in their respective areas of specialty.

66. In order to respond to the sudden large influxes of displaced persons that occurred in early 1995, the United Nations Resident Coordinator established a number of emergency task forces. Emergency task forces for Buchanan and Tubmanburg both sought to ensure an appropriate division of labour among relief agencies in order to provide a rapid and effective response to these sudden influxes.

3. Children in difficult circumstances

67. Children in difficult circumstances are assisted by UNICEF directly and through UNICEF-supported networks of local and international non-governmental organizations. The programme for children in especially difficult circumstances offers social and counselling services, as well as material assistance to orphanages and institutions caring for abandoned, displaced and refugee children. Tracing the families of unaccompanied children and reuniting them are top priorities for UNICEF. In 1994, 95 children in Monrovia were reunited with their families; 30 reunited children received US$ 6.00 each to cover initial tuition, uniform cost and copy book expenses, while 29 others received resettlement packages, including food and non-food items.

68. UNICEF also supports 2,000 orphaned and abandoned children in Gbarnga and Monrovia. Hundreds of these orphans are now trapped in battle zones. UNICEF provides basic maintenance to allow orphanages to continue operating, as well providing food supplements, beds, blankets, clothes, soap and other basic relief items.

69. The continued fighting in Liberia has intensified the severe war trauma suffered by children. In response to this phenomenon, UNICEF is currently implementing a war trauma counsellors' training project at the American Methodist Episcopalian (AME) Zion Community College in Monrovia. By the end of July 1995, the project had trained 133 counsellors. The College will eventually develop a full trauma research and documentation institution.

70. In addition, UNICEF has finalized a treatment and rehabilitation plan to assist 275 disabled children. Most of the children are between the ages of 7 and 15 and are affected by polio. The Benedict Menni Rehabilitation Centre for Children, which was destroyed in the war, has been rebuilt and is serving as a referral centre for physically handicapped children. The orthopaedic workshop of the Centre has been renovated and is manufacturing artificial limbs. Training of physiotherapy and orthopaedic assistants has also begun. A nine-month physiotherapy training with 10 trainees, 5 of them females, has just ended. In addition, a mobile unit assesses injuries and disabilities in rural areas. At the beginning of 1995, UNICEF began extending the services to young adults, especially young women.

71. UNICEF is also offering over 300 street children and former child combatants vocational and agricultural training coupled with a literacy programme and food assistance. When security permits, UNICEF plans to establish similar vocational/literacy training centres in Kakata, Gbarnga, Klay and Voinjama for some 6,000 child soldiers who are expected to demobilize in those areas.

4. The elderly

72. The plight of elderly displaced persons continues to be the special concern of a local non-governmental organization, Special Emergency Relief for the Elderly (SERE). With assistance from UNDP, other United Nations agencies and a number of non-governmental organizations, SERE is able to provide this forgotten vulnerable group with shelter and basic needs in food, health, water and sanitation.

5. Abused women and girls

73. Evidence continues to indicate that the Liberian conflict involves a high incidence of rape and sexual abuse. UNICEF, in collaboration with the National Women's Council of Liberia, has established centres for abused women and girls in Monrovia and Buchanan. There are plans to extend the centres to Tubmanburg and Gbarnga. The centres, referred to as "My Sister's Place", offer trauma counselling, medical and legal services, sex education, HIV/AIDS counselling and income-generation training. In addition to counselling at the centres, mobile teams visit shelters for displaced persons and offer services. To date, 28,000 abused women have been reached through direct counselling centres for displaced persons both in Monrovia and Buchanan. In response to the influx of displaced persons into Buchanan in early 1995, UNICEF increased the number of female trauma counsellors working with the population, 70 per cent of which is women and children.

74. Women and girls also benefit from UNDP assistance in the development of micro-enterprises. Currently, out of 838 micro-enterprises, 65 per cent are owned by women and girls, some of whom fall in the above target group. This income-generation scheme helps to decrease dependence on food aid.

IV. ASSISTANCE BY MEMBER STATES AND OTHER DONORS

75. The humanitarian assistance effort in Liberia has relied on contributions from the international community - both bilateral and multilateral - in response to several appeals issued by the Secretary-General since 1990. Contributions for the period from November 1990 to December 1994 amounted to US$ 232.4 million.

76. In January 1995, the Secretary-General issued an inter-agency appeal seeking US$ 65 million in assistance for the period through June 1995. The appeal was later extended to the end of August 1995. As of 30 August 1995, contributions of US$ 53 million had been made to this most recent appeal. In addition, US$ 7.7 million is known to have been contributed for humanitarian assistance to Liberia outside the framework of the appeal, bilaterally, through non-governmental organizations or directly through United Nations agencies. As has traditionally been the case, the response to food sector requirements of the most recent appeal has been excellent. Support for non-food-sector activities, while improved from the last appeal, remains relatively weak.

77. On 4 October, the Secretary-General issued a further inter-agency appeal for Liberia. The appeal covers the period from September 1995 to August 1996 and seeks US$ 110 million required by United Nations humanitarian assistance agencies to carry out their work in Liberia. Activities reflected in the appeal are designed to address the acute humanitarian crises that continue to affect Liberia, as well as to provide essential services in the war-ravaged country. Wherever possible, the appeal looks beyond the short term and seeks to initiate programmes with a longer-term view, emphasizing community-level initiatives.

78. On 27 October, the Secretary-General will take additional action in support of the peace process by convening a meeting of Member States to address Liberia's rehabilitation, reconstruction and demobilization requirements.

79. By its resolution 49/21 E of 20 December 1994, the General Assembly reiterated its appeal to the international community and intergovernmental organizations to contribute generously to the Trust Fund established by the Secretary-General, in order to enable ECOMOG to fulfil its mandate and to help defray the cost of deployment of additional troops from outside the subregion. Response to this appeal continues to be weak. The Government of the United States is the only significant contributor, with a commitment of approximately US$ 22.2 million to the Trust Fund as of 13 September 1995. Other contributions include US$ 1 million from the United Kingdom, US$ 294,616 from Denmark, US$ 291,056 from Norway and US$ 261,584 from the Netherlands.

80. On 8 May 1995, the Secretary-General invited Member States and other donors to provide information on assistance extended to Liberia in the framework of General Assembly resolution 49/21 E. Replies were received from the following States.

Finland

81. Finland contributed 1 million markkaa to Liberia in 1995 through UNICEF.

Germany

82. Humanitarian assistance provided to Liberia by the Government of Germany was as follows:

Year	Amount (deutsche mark)
1992	364,900
1993	1,705,835
1994	1,001,322
1995	567,000 (as of 6 July 1995)

83. In addition, in 1995, Germany has sponsored rehabilitation and development projects in the amount of 2.5 million deutsche mark.

Ireland

84. Ireland contributed 50,000 Irish pounds for programmes in Liberia during 1995, including 35,000 pounds for displaced Liberians in Buchanan and 15,000 pounds for a mobile medical clinic for abandoned and displaced children.

Japan

85. During fiscal year 1994, the Government of Japan provided the following assistance:

Organization	Amount	Programme
ICRC	SwF 300,000	Relief operation for refugees
UNHCR	US$ 500,000	Repatriation of Liberian refugees
WFP	US$ 1,900,000	4,933 tons of rice as food assistance for persons affected by the conflict in Liberia

V. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

86. Humanitarian assistance activities are beginning to recover from the set-backs suffered in late 1994, when warring factions looted the equipment and vehicles of relief organizations operating in their areas of influence. These events reflected a deterioration in the security situation that forced the suspension of most humanitarian assistance activities in areas outside ECOMOG control. Since then, advances have been made in regaining access to areas that had been cut off. A number of non-governmental organizations, on behalf of WFP, have been delivering food across the border from Côte d'Ivoire. Other relief organizations are exploring ways to reach areas in Lofa county that have been cut off from aid since late 1993. The securing of roads from Monrovia inland to a number of key towns has also had a positive impact on relief operations. As a result of this development it is now possible to consider delivering humanitarian assistance to these areas directly from Monrovia, rather than through time-consuming and costly cross-border operations. A number of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, including UNICEF, WHO and WFP, have taken initial steps to this end.

87. Despite these gains, security constraints continue to limit humanitarian assistance programmes. The relief community in Liberia will continue to address this issue by seeking access to greater numbers of Liberians, based on the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality. Increased access, however, requires minimum levels of security. In view of the recent cease-fire, it should be possible to expand the reach of humanitarian assistance fairly quickly. However, the problem of food shortages among combatants may complicate this effort.

88. It is increasingly clear that any plan for sustainable progress in the rehabilitation of Liberia must include a credible programme for the demobilization and reintegration of combatants into civil society. Estimates

indicate there are 50,000 to 60,000 fighters of whom as many as 15,000 are children. After more than five years of war, many of these fighters know no other way of life. The demobilization and reintegration programme for Liberia must, therefore, be tailored to accommodate the specific needs of underaged fighters. The United Nations system and its partners in Liberia must continue to devote themselves to creating opportunities for fighters to take up productive and fulfilling alternatives to their current, violent existence. If combatants are not offered such alternatives, Liberia could remain destabilized, despite any progress in peace negotiations. Successful demobilization and reintegration of fighters into civil society is a critical component of the transition to normalcy in Liberia.

89. The recent positive developments in the peace process have highlighted the important role to be played by the humanitarian community in this effort. United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and their partners are developing a programme to assure the smooth and permanent reabsorption of demobilized fighters into civilian society. The initial components of such a programme have been incorporated in the latest inter-agency humanitarian appeal for Liberia, launched in early October 1995. Efforts are under way to complete the comprehensive demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programme.

Notes

1/ S/26272, annex.

2/ S/1995/7, annexes I and II.

3/ S/1995/742, annex.